

1. (Amended) A process for forming images comprising the steps of:
conducting recording on a recording medium provided with an
image-receiving layer; and
laminating a laminating film comprising a thermoplastic film without a
backing layer onto the image-receiving layer and smoothing a surface of the thermoplastic film
by heating and pressurizing means to bond a back side of the thermoplastic film onto the
image-receiving layer.

B1
2. (Amended) A process for forming images as set forth in Claim 1,
wherein a surface glossiness of the heating and pressurizing means is equal or greater than 10%
at an incident angle of 20°.

Sub C1
3. (Amended) A process for forming images as set forth in Claim 2,
wherein the surface glossiness is equal or greater than 70% at an incident angle of 75°.

4. (Amended) A process for forming images as set forth in Claim 1,
wherein either a glass transition point of the thermoplastic film is lower than a glass transition
point of a binder resin in the image-receiving layer or a film-forming temperature of the
thermoplastic film is lower than a film-forming temperature of a binder resin in the
image-receiving layer.

5. (Amended) A process for forming images as set forth in Claim 1,
wherein the thermoplastic film is a laminate of two or more thermoplastic polymer layers.

B1
cont'd
Sub C1

6. (Amended) An apparatus for forming images comprising:
an ink-jet head for recording on a recording medium;
a laminates section for laminating a laminating film comprised of a thermoplastic film without a backing layer onto the recording medium on which recording has been conducted; and
heating and pressurizing means for smoothing the thermoplastic film by heating and pressurizing and bonding a back side of the thermoplastic film onto the image-receiving layer.

REMARKS

Claims 1-6 are presented for consideration, with Claims 1 and 6 being independent.

Claims 1-6 have been amended to further distinguish Applicants' invention from the cited art.

Applicants are submitting concurrently herewith a Request to Make Drawing Changes in which Figures 3A-3C are labelled as --PRIOR ART-- as required by the Examiner. Approval of the drawing change is respectfully requested.

Claims 1 and 6 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) or alternatively under 35 U.S.C. §103 as allegedly being unpatentable over Nakazawa '381. Claims 2 and 3 were rejected as allegedly being obvious over Nakazawa in view of Yamamoto '675 and Ogawa '200. Claim 4 was rejected as allegedly being obvious over Nakazawa, and Claim 5 was rejected as allegedly being obvious over Nakazawa in view of Yamamoto and JP '949. These rejections are respectfully traversed.